

**SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE**

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**On**

# **SUFFOLK COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE BUDGET**

**MAY 9, 2006**

**Minutes taken by:**

Lucia Braaten, Court Stenographer

**Minutes transcribed by:**

Denise Weaver, Legislative Aide

***(The meeting was called to order at 3:15 P.M.)***

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Legislators, please be seated, or, rather, maybe we'll stand up. Before we get started, we'll do the Pledge of Allegiance, and then we will start the Capital Hearing •• Capital Budget Hearing. So if you all will rise and join us for the Pledge of Allegiance led by Legislator Rick Montano.

***(Salutation)***

Okay. I only have one card. Let me first ask the Clerk if the affidavits for noticing this hearing are in proper order.

**MR. BAKER:**

Yes, they are.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Okay, very good. So noted. We •• I have one card and that is Charles K. Stein from Suffolk County Community College. If anyone else wishes to be heard, they need to fill out a green card, which are available in the front.

**MR. STEIN:**

Good afternoon. I've distributed copies of my statement to you. I'd first like to take the opportunity to thank the Suffolk County Legislature for all its past support of the Suffolk County Community College's Capital and Operating Budget needs. The Legislature has continuously demonstrated its leadership and vision in supporting our college of excellence and the college students and County as a whole thank you.

With respect to my comments today, I'd like to take this opportunity to describe the actions taken by the County Executive regarding the proposed 2007 through 2009 Capital Program and 2007 Capital Budget and the impact on the Suffolk County Community College. In general, there was one project deleted, two projects requested and not included, one existing project for which additional funds were requested, and a denial of our request to advance design funds for a new building. I'll give you the details.

The gymnasium health •• fitness center at the Eastern Campus project 2120. This project was included by the Legislature last year following a veto by the County Executive. The project is a component of the College's Master Plan Update and has been submitted to the state for consideration. We're requesting that this project be included in the subsequent years section of the Capital Program so that we may continue to pursue State financial support.

The Culinary Arts Program equipment project. Last year the County Legislature unanimously approved and the County Executive signed Resolution Number 865 of 2005, authorizing the lease for new Culinary Arts and Hospitality Center in downtown Riverhead. The Capital Project being requested would fund the remaining equipment necessary to complete the outfitting of the culinary and baking laboratories, demonstration theater and classrooms.

The overall equipment costs for the program are approximately \$850,000.

However, the college has received commitments of \$520,000 in funding from various sources, representing 61% of the total funds required. We're now requesting that the remaining \$330,000 be added to the 2007 Capital Budget to properly equip this facility projected to be available in 2007.

And I'd like to amend my prepared remarks by saying we've been advised that 150,000 of that money that's been pledged requires a match by the County, so therefore it would be imperative, really, to get this Capital Project included so we can get that 150,000 from the State.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Mr. Chairman.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

I'd ask that you hold off on your questions until Mr. Stein concludes his remarks.

**MR. STEIN:**

Repairs to the athletic fields, college wide. This project would repair the existing athletic fields at the Grant Campus, which are unsafe to use due to poor drainage. This includes the baseball field, soccer/lacrosse field, and softball field. Currently the college is forced to lease alternative fields since competing teams and athletic associations refuse to endanger players on existing surfaces. The renovated fields would be constructed with subsurface drainage and synthetic turf.

In addition, a new irrigation system is needed for the Ammerman Campus athletic fields as well as minor facility improvements to both Ammerman and the Eastern Campus fields that are used for outdoor activity.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

That project was left off?

**MR STEIN:**

It was •• it was not included.

**MR. ROMAINE:**

How much is it?

**MR. STEIN:**

It is critical to demonstrate local support in order for the State to consider this project for State funding.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

How much was that project?

**MR. STEIN:**

It was for \$2.4 million. Number four, reconstruction of the Central Plaza at Ammerman Campus, project number 2187. The original scope of the project exceeded the available funding and certain key aspects had to be removed. These components include a memorial fountain, stone facade work and concrete reconstruction. And an irrigation system for the new plantings. Additional funding is being requested to reincorporate these components and complete what is now known as Veterans Plaza. Anyone who has recently visited the Ammerman Campus can see how beautiful this project is progressing, and it would be a shame to leave it only partially done.

Number five, Science Technology and general class ••

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Oh •• I'm sorry, Charles. How much was that? Number Four?

**MR. STEIN:**

We requested \$750,000.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Okay.

**MR. STEIN:**



The Science Technology and General Classroom Building at the Ammerman Campus, project number 2174. As the college continues to expand its nursing enrollment in partnership with seven Suffolk County hospitals, and as the growth of the regional economy is largely dependent on the adequacy of a highly skilled and educated technical workforce, the need for a new Science and Technology Building is a strategic economic development investment for the County.

A funding timetable change for this project is being requested. In 2005 the college received half of the State funding required to complete the project. This year, the State Legislature has provided the rest of the State's share. Therefore, funding exists to begin the design phase for this sorely needed building and advance from 2009 up to 2007 for design funding is being requested. There are 17 projects with continuing authorizations outstanding not changed nor affected by the Executive's proposal and we thank him for that.

All of these projects were included in the Capital Program adopted last year by the Legislature. In total, the Executive's proposed Capital Budget and Program removes \$21,113,000 and does not advance \$28,550 in Capital Project funds as requested by the college.

I again want to thank you for your commitment •• and for the commitment that the Legislature has made to the capital needs of the college and ask that you recognize the difficulties that the Executive's recommendations will cause. Thank you for the opportunity provided to address these concerns.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

I just want to get clarification. The first one was deleted from the Capital Budget, the second one was deleted, the third one was left out. The fourth •

**MR. STEIN:**

The first one was deleted, the second one was not included.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Oh, the second one was not included?

**MR. STEIN:**

Correct. The third was not included. The fourth, the request for the additional funding was not included. And the fifth, we had requested an advance up to 2007 for the design money, and that was not done.

**LEG. MONTANO:**

If I may, Jay. What's the amount in the 2009 budget?

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

For the college?

**LEG. MONTANO:**

Number five, they want to move it up. How much are we talking about?

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

On number five, how much money is that •• that you're trying to move forward?

**LEG. MONTANO:**

Dollar amount.

**MR. STEIN:**

Hang on a second.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

Five?

**LEG. MONTANO:**

No. That's number four, 750.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

That was 750,000?

**MR. STEIN:**

The 750,000 was for the plaza.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

That was four.

**LEG. BROWNING:**

That was for the plaza.

**LEG. MONTANO:**

Yeah, what's the amount on •• I'm sorry, Chuck. I just want to get a dollar amount in the Capital Budget that you're requesting to move from 2009 to 2007.

**MR. STEIN:**

Yeah, I'll be with you in a second.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

You can get back to us on that.

**LEG. MONTANO:**

Yeah, you can get back to us. We can look it up.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

I want to •• I want to go to the item number one, which is the fitness center.

**MR. STEIN:**

The design was 1.6 million.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Oh, you have the number.

**LEG. MONTANO:**

Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

All right. I'd like to talk about the fitness center. I know there are, I got what, there's three campuses of Suffolk Community College. Is that right? Or, how many campuses?

**MR. STEIN:**

We have three campuses.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

And I'm assuming that two of them have fitness facilities and one does not?

**MR. STEIN:**

Correct.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Okay, and the one that does not is the eastern most one. And in terms of size, the eastern most campus has, what, about 3,000 students?

**MR. STEIN:**

Just under, but it is growing.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

How does that compare with some of the other campus sizes?

**MR. STEIN:**

Well, the Grant Campus in Brentwood is about 7,500 students and we're about 11,000 and change for the Ammerman Campus.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Okay, so those are sizable campuses.

**MR. STEIN:**

Yes.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

And I assume they have sizeable fitness facilities?

**MR. STEIN:**

Yes.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

I just seems •• I mean, 3,000 is still a lot of kids, a lot of students, and they ought to be able to recreate somewhere, there ought to be a place to shoot basketball or take karate or something like that, and none of that exists at that facility. But the number attached is pretty high if I recall, it's about a \$17 million item.

**MR. STEIN:**

Right, and it's designed for the size of the campus.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Okay. It's appropriately scaled. Have you considered phasing•in that project, developing it as two capital projects, one to get the gym and lockers, and then the classrooms and other things later on?

**MR. STEIN:**

The gym and lockers •• just a gym and lockers alone would be about 11 million.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Eleven million.

**LEG. HORSLEY:**

What is 17, then?

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

That includes some classroom space.

**MR. STEIN:**



It includes classroom space and other aspects of the building •• yeah.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Right, and last year it was in subsequent years and this year it's disappeared.

**MR. STEIN:**

Correct. And we'd like •• if you put it back in subsequent years that would give us the opportunity to continue to pursue the State funding.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

But now, of that 17 million, how much of it would actually be County funded?

**MR. STEIN:**

Half.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Half, okay. But I guess for the Capital Budget purpose you have to show the full amount.

**MR. STEIN:**

Correct.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Mr. Chair, I'll yield to Legislator Romaine, but I have questions.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Obviously it is frustrating for me because I would obviously like to see that facility. It would be nice for the whole community out there. Legislator Romaine.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Mr. Stein, let me ask you something about Suffolk Community College. On a pro rata percentage basis where is the fastest growth •• which campus is demonstrating the fastest growth?

**MR. STEIN:**

The Brentwood Campus has been ••

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Not in absolute numbers, but in a percentage number. What campus is demonstrating the greatest growth?

**MR. STEIN:**

Okay, on a percentage basis I would say that the Eastern Campus has been going up basically because of the size. Obviously the percentages show up bigger there.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Sure, because it's the area of the County that's most •• that was less populated, is now where all the growth in the County is occurring, in the catchment of the Ammerman and particularly in the Eastern Campus.

Let me ask you this. We're talking about a gym here. Let's talk about something else that was approved last year over the County Exec's veto, and that was the library for the Eastern Campus. Could you give us the status of that, because I think that project relates to this project just like when we were talking about Mr. Lindsay's sound wall related to John Kennedy's sound wall. The status of the library I think relates to where we are with the gym or what will happen with the gym.

**MR. STEIN:**

Yeah I'd like to comment on it. I'm happy to see that the Learning Resource Center has been kept in. There may have been some confusion in terms of the narrative because the narrative said something about contingent upon State funding. We've actually had State funding for that project for three years, so ••

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

And this Legislature approved it.

**MR. STEIN:**

Yes. And, you know, we would like to ••

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

And have the funds been appropriated?

**MR. STEIN:**

Not as yet. We sent over the appropriating resolution actually December 20th of 2005 in anticipation of the January legislative action.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

And the Executive hasn't acted on that as of yet.

**MR. STEIN:**

Not that I'm aware of.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

Okay. Okay. And could you comment on the Culinary Institute? I think actually Legislator Horsley and I are resolving that problem. I think we are

submitting an amendment to the Capital Budget to restore that funding that was I believe inadvertently, correct me if I'm wrong, inadvertently left out.

**MR. STEIN:**

Thank you.

**LEG. ROMAINE:**

So we are looking to restore that funding to the Capital Program and believe me, I will be here next year, I will immediately move to appropriate. I won't wait for the Executive.

**MR. STEIN:**

Thank you.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Okay. I have Legislator Montano next and then Legislator Kennedy. And I just ask since we are •• we recessed the Public Works Committee and we're approaching the time we said or we've reached the time we said we were going to start, so if we could just go as quickly as possible.

**LEG. MONTANO:**

Chuck, just very quickly. You said there were 11,000 students at the Ammerman Campus?

**MR. STEIN:**

Approximately. Off the top of my head, yeah.

**LEG. MONTANO:**

And in Brentwood you have 7,500?

**MR. STEIN:**

Seventy•five hundred to 8,000, somewhere in that vicinity.

**LEG. MONTANO:**

What was the number in Riverhead?

**MR. STEIN:**

It's below 3,000, but they have been moving up.

**LEG. MONTANO:**

Half, okay. Just with respect to project number one, the gymnasium, how long has it been in the Capital Budget?

**MR. STEIN:**

The Legislature put it in last year. We had requested ••

**LEG. MONTANO:**

As a first time inclusion?

**MR. STEIN:**

A first time inclusion.

**LEG. MONTANO:**

Okay. And do you know why it was deleted this year or the rationale for that?

**MR. STEIN:**

No, I don't.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

So the Capital Budget would be smaller than the year before.

**LEG. MONTANO:**

Well, that's the obvious. I mean •• but I'm looking for •• I'm looking for the backroom stuff. Okay. But it's only been there •• it was put in last year but not in •• it was a first•time item last year and it was put in subsequent years. This year it's deleted.

**MR. STEIN:**

Correct.

**LEG. MONTANO:**

I got the picture. Thanks.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Legislator Kennedy.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Just a couple of quick questions, Chuck. The library •• well, actually in both



cases, lack of a gymnasium, I just had occasion to go ahead and flip through your brochure for the summer curriculum and phys ed courses make up a key component, I guess, of many of the Associates Degree programs. But in addition, there's quite an extensive offering for, I guess, evening or adult ed types of offerings as well. Where do people on the east end go for that now? Do you offer it or is it just not a part of the curriculum there?

**MR. STEIN:**

Well, many of the indoor type phys ed classes, if they want to take them, they would have to come drive west to Selden which would be the closest campus.

**LEG. SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Which is a long way away.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

So a student can be enrolled in a regular bona fide Associates Program there on the east end and their obligated to have to go ahead and schlep into Selden in order to fulfill that educational requirement. And as far as adult ed offerings and things such as that, it's just not there.

**MR. STEIN:**

It's tough to do without a facility.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

What do students do for a library access at this point? Are they over at the Riverhead Public Library?

**MR. STEIN:**

We have a library in the Peconic building, which is woefully inadequate. Ten years ago, when Middle States Accreditation was at the college, they were very critical of the existing library space and they stated at that time that we had better take steps to correct it. And Middle States will be back here in March of 2007. And, you know, again, we're grateful that the Learning Resource Center has been included in this, we look forward to getting the resolution •• the appropriating resolution approved so we can begin the process.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

All right. Let's •• you have more while you ••

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Repairs to the athletic field. Number three.

**MR. STEIN:**

Yes.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

In particular I see with the Grant Campus, you're actually leasing other fields at this point in order for the teams to go ahead and conduct their games and do their workouts and things?

**MR. STEIN:**

The Junior College Athletic Association won't permit games to be played on the field because of the conditions. So ••

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

What's it cost to lease a field?

**MR. STEIN:**

We're spending somewhere in the vicinity of \$15,000 a year for leasing fields.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Plus •• which the transportation and the other items that are associated with the teams in order to get them there, the scheduling aspects, you are subject to whatever the other organization's schedules are. We're usually taking second shift, such as that.

Finally, with five, what do you expect •• what is the projected expansion at

this point with the Nursing Program? It has historically been a highly competitive program with a very finite number of seats.

**MR. STEIN:**

Yes. And as you know, the college has been very successful in a public/private partnership starting with Good Samaritan Hospital last year and that paved the way for the Sayville facility. And since that time, six other hospitals have come to agreement with the College for adding seats, total of 90 additional nursing seats this current year. And the second class will start in September, which will give us 180 nursing seats. So the College, which is, by the way, the largest Nursing Program in New York State, Suffolk Community College, is progressing very well, and thank goodness the hospitals are providing us with the operating funds to pay the faculty that's necessary.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

And as a matter of fact, we have a resolution before us in the cycle to go ahead and accept some of that additional funding to fund faculty, vis•a•vis the private hospital consortium.

**MR. STEIN:**

Correct.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

And, by the way, you do a great job with turning out nurses.

**MR. STEIN:**

The faculty is to be congratulated for that.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

John ••

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

The last piece here is, just so that I understand, you speak about 21 million that has been removed and 28 million, give or take, that has not been advanced, so that is a combined 49 million that is not being addressed?

**MR. STEIN:**

Well, the 28 million is the Science Technology Building at the Ammerman Campus that we asked for in advance of the design money.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

Okay.

**MR. STEIN:**

And the other number is the balance of the others.

**LEG. KENNEDY:**

I see.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

All right. The last question is •• the last question belongs to Legislator Montano.

**LEG. MONTANO:**

Just a quick question. In respect to the accessibility of transportation from one campus to another, there's no shuttle that the college provides, is there?

**MR. STEIN:**

No, there isn't.

**LEG. MONTANO:**

And is there •• I mean, what's the accessibility if a student is at the Brentwood Campus and wants to go, you know, play in the gym at Ammerman. Is he or she required to take their own car or is there a, you know, a scheduled bus service that's direct?

**MR. STEIN:**

There's no direct bus service. I know ••

**LEG. MONTANO:**

So you're basically left, as a student you're left on your own hook to get from one campus to another.

**MR. STEIN:**

Yes. Legislator Vilorio•Fisher had come to the Board of Trustees to discuss an examination of the transportation system to address this issue. So, I think she's working on that.

**LEG. MONTANO:**

Okay.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Thank you, Legislators.

**MR. STEIN:**

Thank you.

**CHAIRMAN SCHNEIDERMAN:**

Thank you, Chuck. Okay. Are there any other speakers wishing to be heard? Okay. I will make a motion to adjourn, second by Legislator Horsley. All in favor? We are adjourned. Thank you.

***(The Meeting was Adjourned at 2:29 P.M.)***